

REMARKS

Claims 1-12, 14, and 16-20 are pending, including independent claims 1, 2, 5, 14, and 17-19. Claims 2-4 have been allowed. The remaining claims are again rejected as anticipated by or obvious over the prior art, with Van Kleeck being the primary reference.

Independent claims 1 and 5 were amended previously to recite that speech guidance is stopped if it would interfere with an audio or image output of an operated device. The Examiner concedes this feature is not disclosed in Van Kleeck but asserts that it is disclosed in Nakano. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Nakano describes a voice-controlled computer that provides operator guidance from a speech synthesizer section 7. When the operator depresses a key in the key input section 1 while the operator guidance is being audibly produced, the operator guidance is stopped. (See, e.g., Abstract; col. 2, lines 46-48, 59-68). This feature of Nakano is a “compulsory stop” feature that allows a user to stop the operator guidance simply by pushing any key in the input section (e.g., col. 6, line 50-58), much like pushing any key on a computer keyboard will stop a screen-saver mode on a computer monitor. There is no suggestion in Nakano to control an operated device producing an audio or image output from the key input section, or to prevent speech guidance if it would interfere with an audio or image output of an operated device.

Similarly, the features regarding more specific audio or image outputs recited in dependent claims 6-8 and 10 are simply not disclosed in Nakano, contrary to the Examiner’s assertion. Further, the Examiner appears to misunderstand dependent claim 9, because the portions of Van Kleeck relied on by the Examiner are not applicable to the claimed feature. Claim 9 recites that when speech input guidance is stopped (because it would interfere with an audio output of an operated device, such as a radio), guidance can be provided with a screen and/or the availability of a speech input can be confirmed with a sound, such as a beep (see, e.g., application at p. 14, lines 13-21, and p. 25, line 26 to p. 26, line 17). Van Kleeck does not describe or suggest this feature.

Claim 14 previously was amended to recite that when a speech input executing command indicates only one of an operation object and the content of an operation, the device

provides to the user a speech input executing command corresponding to the other. Although the Examiner asserts that this feature is disclosed in Van Kleeck, Applicant disagrees. The cited passages in Van Kleeck (col. 5, lines 20-24 and col. 6, lines 6-63) describe a hierarchy of instructions for each separate application. Van Kleeck does not disclose, for example, that when a user provides a voice instruction of the content of an operation but not an operation object, the system provides an identification of operation objects that can perform the operation. Applicant has amended claim 14 to further clarify this feature, and support for this claim is found, for example, in the application at p. 30, line 25 to p. 31, line 31, and at p. 40, lines 7-27. Thus, if a user voices only an operation object, such as “mail” for email, the system can display the speech operations available for this operation object. Conversely, if the user voices only an operation, such as “up”, that is applicable to multiple operation objects (e.g., the volume on an audio device, or the temperature), the system can display the operation objects available for this operation.


Independent claim 17 recites that the order of the provided commands is changed according to the counts of outputs or the dates of outputs. Applicant disagrees with the Examiner’s assertion that this feature is disclosed by Cohen. The cited passage of Cohen (col. 6, lines 25-32) describes that a new output (e.g., a prompt to take a shortcut) is provided when the count of the typical prompt reaches a certain number. This feature does not disclose changing the order of the provided commands, as claimed. Applicant has amended claim 17 to clarify this feature, and support for this claim is found, for example, in the application at p. 9, lines 15-20; p. 33, lines 12-25; and p. 41, lines 7-14. Thus, a display of a plurality of speech input executing commands may be sorted so that, e.g., commands used less frequently or used less recently are prioritized for display.

Independent claim 18 recites that the form of the guidance output of a command is different from that of other commands if the count for the speech input executing command exceeds a predetermined number. Support for this claim is found, for example, in the application at p. 9, lines 21-27, and p. 10, lines 23-25. The Examiner relies on his rejection of claim 11, although claim 11 does not describe the same feature as claim 18. Applicant requests that the rejection of claim 18 be withdrawn.

Independent claim 19 recites that the speech input executing commands provided to the user are prioritized according to frequency of use. The Examiner asserts that this feature is disclosed in Van Kleeck at col. 7, lines 45-47. That sentence states that “infrequently used commands could be omitted,” and does not disclose that commands provided to the user are prioritized relative to one another. Applicant has amended claim 19 to clarify it, and support for this claim is found, for example, in the application at p. 33, line 26 to p. 34, line 11. Thus, commands provided to the user may be prioritized according to frequency of use, e.g., by sorting them in order of frequency of usage, or by displaying commands with a high usage frequency in a color different from others or in a different size.

In conclusion, Applicant respectfully requests that the above-described amendments to the claims be entered, and the application be reconsidered. These amendments were not made previously because Applicant believed the previous claim language was sufficient to describe the invention and to distinguish over the cited art. If the Examiner believes the application still is not in condition for allowance, he is invited to telephone Applicant’s undersigned attorney at 312-321-4723 to discuss any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,


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